NSC BRIEFING

22 April 1958

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SOUTH KOREAN ELECTIONS

- 1. The elections for the national assembly to be held on 2 May are not expected to affect directly the position of President Rhee, who has two more years in office.
 - A. Both the pro-Rhee Liberal Party and the opposition Democratic Party are conservative and favor the nation's alignment with the US.
 - B. Any leftist participation in the election will be via independent candidates.
 - C. The election appears to be continuing the trend toward a twoparty system. Fewer minor parties and independent candidates are running and not many are expected to win.
- II. The Democrats are attacking the Liberals on the issues of government corruption and Rhee's unification policy.
 - A. The Democrats recently rejected unification by unilateral South Korean military action, which Rhee strongly advocates, and declared support for UN supervised elections in both North and South Korea.
 - B. The presidential succession is also an underlying issue; if the Liberals win a two-thirds majority they are likely by amending the Constitution to eliminate opposition Vice President Chang Myon from succeeding to the presidency.
- III. The American Embassy in Seoul sees little prospect for the Democrats to win a majority. The popular political estimate in Seoul is that the balance of power in the outgoing assembly (Liberals 131,

Democrats 46) will carry over into the new one. Approved For Release 2000/08/29: CIA-RDP79R00890A000900080012-7